

# Sunapee School Board Special Meeting

## SMHS Music Room

March 23, 2017

### Call to Order:

School Board Chair Skarin called the School Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### Roll Call:

Paul Skarin, Chair

Brian Garland, Vice Chair

Ed Andersen

Jesse Tyler

### Others Present:

Russell Holden, Superintendent

### Pledge/Moment of Silence:

The Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence were led by School Board Chair Paul Skarin.

### Agenda Item #2

Ed Andersen made a motion to accept the resignation of School Board member Heather Furlong.

The motion was seconded by Brian Garland.

The vote was unanimous in favor.

### Public Forum:

**Cindy Currier, resident of Georges Mills**, spoke in support of the current school board members interviewing interested candidates for the vacant school board position.

**Don Bettencourt, resident of Sunapee**, asked the School Board members to appoint John Augustine due to his having the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of votes.

**Jan Bettencourt, resident of Sunapee,** supports John Augustine's appointment to the Sunapee School Board.

**Jody Manson, resident of Sunapee,** spoke in favor of recognizing the voters' choice in appointing a new school board member.

**Diane Robbins, resident of Sunapee,** supports John Augustine's appointment to the Sunapee School Board.

**John Brandolini, resident of Georges Mills,** supports the appointment of John Augustine to the Sunapee School Board.

**Kevin Cooney, resident of Sunapee,** has no objection to John Augustine being appointed to the school board but objects to the presumption that the school board is not acting in the public interest. He believes the decision should be made by those who were elected to represent all the voters.

**Board discussion on the appointment process:**

**Ed Andersen** asked why the Board appoints rather than goes with the candidate with the next highest number of votes.

**Paul Skarin** explained the various processes that have been used in the past several years to fill a vacant school board seat. He stated that it was time to have a clearer policy going forward on how to fill a vacant seat.

**Brian Garland** read the SSB policy on filling a vacant seat which follows the state statute.

**Superintendent Holden** read the state statute RSA197:26.

**Brian Garland** asked about calling for a special election.

**Paul Skarin** responded that the SSB shall appoint according to the state RSA.

**Brian Garland** stated that 640 voters agreed with his position on a strong school equals a strong community when they voted for him, and that he would do them a disservice by not going through the interview process and choosing the best available candidate. He supports the posting and interview process.

**Jesse Tyler** supports a willingness to cast a wider net for interested candidates in order to engage more of the community in discussions on how best to move forward with the school district.

**Ed Andersen** believed it is important to give serious consideration to John Augustine as a candidate for the vacant school board seat, but that the two candidates who received the highest number of votes are sitting on the Board. He supports speaking with several people in the community as candidates rather than appoint.

**Paul Skarin** stated that we have a voting process and that the election is over. The elected representatives will do their best; trust us to do what we have been charged to do by the community.

At this time there was a point of order from **Paul Manson, resident of Sunapee**, who asked that the statute be read again for the wording. He states that the statute says “fill” rather than “appoint”.

At this time **Paul Skarin** called for a motion to be made in regards to the process of filling the vacant school board seat.

**Jesse Tyler** made the motion to utilize the media and post the position of school board member to fill the remainder of a one year term to interested residents of Sunapee by sending a letter of interest to Superintendent Holden giving name, address, contact information and a statement as to why you are interested in serving on the Board. The deadline for receiving letters is 12noon on Friday, March 31, 2017. Depending on the number of candidates, interviews will be held on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, April 4<sup>th</sup> and, if necessary, April 5<sup>th</sup> before the school board meeting where the new school board member will be announced.

**Brian Garland** seconded the motion.

The vote was unanimous in favor.

Public Forum:

**Jan Bettencourt** asked how would qualifications for candidates be decided and would those be posted?

**John Brandolini** asked if the position would be filled for the remaining two years of Heather Furlong's term or for 1 year?

**Superintendent Holden** responded that the position would be filled for the remainder of this year's term and that the appointed member could choose to run for election at that point to fill the last year of Heather Furlong's term.

**Paul Manson** expressed his disappointment.

**Jody Manson** expressed her disappointment. She also asked if the interviews for school board candidates would be a public school board meeting and would there be the opportunity for a public forum to weigh in?

**Gidget Ducharme, Sunapee resident,** asked if the Board would be adopting this discussion process moving forward. She wished the Board good luck.

**Brian Garland** moved to adjourn the meeting.

**Jesse Tyler** seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Kathy Ward